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ABSTRACT

The key elements of promoting human traits such as building trust through proactive communication, empowering individuals, affirming civic values through diversity, serving as a symbol, and increasing accountability and responsibility as they relate to teachers and students are the focus of this article, which provides educators with useful guidelines to instill these virtues in themselves and their students in U.S. schools. It also offers suggestions for playing the role of cultural mediator in democratic institutions. If teachers are to promote global and multicultural perspectives in their leadership roles, they will need to develop new plans of interaction in diverse s ttings. This should be the axiom on which reflection, dialogue, and action in academic institutions are based. Teachers as civic leaders must work with students and collaborate with other educators in myriad ways to create a communal democratic culture at schools. A pragmatic model is presented to enhance universal civic values. This model stresses that culturally relevant curriculum and instructional techniques should relate personally and experientially to the cognitive, academic, social, and linguistic abilities of students. Teachers are urged to diversify teaching methods and the use of teaching aids to address different avenues of learning in the interests of educational equity. (Contains 21 references.) (Author/SLD)

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Instilling Civic and Democratic Values in ALL Students: A Multicultural Perspective

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the key elements of promoting human traits such as building trust through proactive communication, empowering individuals, affirming civic values through diversity, serving as a symbol, and increasing accountability and responsibility as they relate to teachers and students. This article provides participants with useful guidelines to instill these virtues in themselves and their students in the U.S. schools; it also offers suggestions for playing the role of cultural mediation in democratic institutions.

If teachers are to promote global and multicultural perspectives in their leadership roles, they will need to develop new plans of interaction in diverse settings. This should be the axiom upon which reflection, dialogue, and action in academic institutions are based. Thus teachers as civic leaders must work with students and collaborate with educators in myriad ways to create a communal democratic culture at schools. A pragmatic model to enhance universal civic values in diverse settings will be presented.

Instilling Civic and Democratic Values in ALL Students: A Multicultural Perspective

Introduction

The nature of the American society has been influenced by changing demographics that have contributed to the increase of the preexisting multicultural United States population. These changes also have a profound impact on educating children democratically in the U.S. public schools. Thus, the increasingly multicultural/multilingual classroom, where diverse values and belief systems are represented, poses huge challenges for teachers and educators who themselves bring in their own values as well. A major task to instill democratic values and social mores conducive to the social and academic growth of learners is by no means an easy one. Therefore, teachers and educators need to have a more comprehensive vision to help them prepare their students for a democratic life inside and outside the classroom (Kierstead & Wagner, 1993; Rothstein, 1996). In other words, diverse classrooms require teachers and educators to undertake meeting the special needs of all students by celebrating cultural and linguistic diversity in the pluralistic schools.

Since today's classrooms present an array of diverse student populations whose values vary considerably in terms of cultural and linguistic norms, it is vital to cultivate these differences and promote cross-cultural understanding within an overarching framework of more democratic values. One way to enhance these universal values is through multicultural education. As a comprehensive approach, multicultural education aims to multiply educational opportunities for all learners. In its premise, it will reduce prejudice and promote tolerance, foster understanding and enhance communication, facilitate socialization and increase harmony, and augment appreciation of diversity in the pluralistic society (Grant, 1995; Grant & Gomez, 1996; Suleiman, 1995). Consequently, multicultural education is not only seen as panacea for problems in schools, but also as a

way to enhance democratic civic values in students attending democratic educational institutions.

As laboratories for exercising democratic values, and as a microcosm of the whole diverse society, today's classrooms present teachers with the challenging task of cultivating cultural diversity and maintaining a meaningful interaction in the learning/teaching environment (Bennett, 1995; Nieto, 1996; Suleiman, 1995). Thus, teachers must be keenly aware of and sensitive to different cultural needs of all students in order to promote the desired civic values in students.

Using the multicultural framework, the purpose of this paper is to explore these issues and presents implications for promoting an ambiance conducive to learning, and exercising democratic civic values congruent with socializing in culturally diverse environments. Hence, the increasingly multicultural society we live in requires a profound understanding of democracy as an overarching framework that governs our human relations. This paper focuses on today's diverse classroom as a microcosm of the global social unit. The discussion will explore relevant aspects of promoting democratic values and civic responsibilities as they pertain to participants in the multicultural educational institutions.

Background

As the winds of demographic changes blow in U.S. social and educational institutions, we must create a more harmonious culture within the universal framework of our human relations. Since the growing demand for multiculturalism is coupled with the phobia of the unknown, one thing is certain: diversity of cultures contributes to the richness in any society. Although many conceive diversity as a source of divisiveness, division, conflict, and lack of cultural harmony, it is--in fact-- the foundation of the American pluralistic democracy that contributes to the strength and richness of the its democratic civilization (Moore & Suleiman, 1996).

E Pluribus Unum--out of many one-- is the motto of the United States. It envisions creating a harmonious diverse democratic society provided that a balance between pluribus (pluralism) and unum (unity) is maintained at the micro/macro cultural levels of the society. The profound understanding of this platitude should be the basis for celebrating diversity, achieving cultural harmony, and imparting social justice. It should also become the revisited tool that dissipates the myths about diversity issues in the American society.

Like the ancient flourishing human societies, the American civilization has not evolved from nowhere; it is built upon the diversity of cultures. To achieve social harmony and actualize our ideals, it is vital to acknowledge the metaphysical and intellectual being of diverse groups and highlight their positive contributions to the American multicultural democratic society. Revitalizing democratic values requires an ethical commitment and responsiveness to the current and historical issues that shape the future and help actualize these ideals (Kierstead & Wagner, 1993). Consequently, for participants to play a more meaningful civic role in the American society, they should recognize commonalties among cultures through the acknowledgment of cultural differences.

Notwithstanding, it has been assumed that the study of culture is the study of perfection. This conjecture is more attuned to the definition of multiculturalism and its promising consequences. This study will enable us to be more conscious of our idiosyncratic look at life and gain a more comprehensive and universal perspective of human reality. The greatest eminence we can attain is to promote an awareness about other cultures and impart it to our fellow citizens. This allows individuals to unequivocally view themselves as they are seen from the lens of others. At the same time, it helps to combat the cross-cultural errorism and provincial stratification that might inculcate cultural conflict, ethnic polarization and social injustice.

Then, to promote an awareness of self and others, the behavior of social and educational institutions in the American democracy is not to be bound by monocultural conditioning which might create fear of diversity and resentment to multiculturalism

(Suleiman, 1996). Making accurate and educated assessments about the behavior of individuals, groups , and institutions will facilitate the desired change that justly contributes to the harmonization process for the benefit of the pluralistic society (Kierstead & Wagner, 1993; Rothstein, 1996).

Enhancing Democratic Values Through Schooling

The Declaration of Independence of the United States of America affirms several universal democratic values such as equality, justice, freedom, and the pursuit of happiness. Constitutional amendments also reiterate these values so that individuals are not deprived of a meaningful life and civil liberties. In fact, the democratic society acknowledges individual differences and appreciates diverse values; schools should operate to enhance and affirm these ideals through a democratic process (Kierstead & Wagner, 1993; Rothstein, 1996). In the democratic institutions, functions to encourage all individuals regardless of their diversity to develop their competencies to collectively contribute to the democratic continuum (Grant & Gomez, 1996).

Inherent in the democratic society is the value of diversity in groups and individuals (Grant, 1995; Nieto, 1996). Unless a dynamic balance is achieved between pluralism and diversity, democratic values will not be actualized in the life of all citizens: males, females, people of color, immigrants, mainstream, and many others. A dynamic balance among these democratic principles would be attainable if diversity is valued and celebrated in terms of the pluralistic universal values. Otherwise, the United States' pluralism and diversity would make "a mockery of such mythological nonsense as the proverbial melting pot in which people of color were never meant to bathe" (Cortes, 1990, p. 13).

Recognizing this potential for harm without the balance in achieving democratic values and translating their principles, Cortes (1990) acknowledges the role of schools in instilling these human values. Schools have the potential to bring about the desired change

in society and educators can contribute significantly to prepare future citizens and nurture them in the classroom (Chisholm, 1994; Marinez-Casio, 1996).

According to (Cortes, 1990), schools can contribute to enriching democratic values through a five-pillared vision that has special cogency for providing the best democratic education for all. This vision of "multiculturation" builds on the commonalties and values the differences among the members of the pluralistic nation. To do so, this vision must be an integral part of the society's social and educational institutions. It consists of the following pillars:

1. Empowering acculturation of all Americans to an all-inclusive, equitable unum
2. Sensitizing acculturation to help all Americans develop better intercultural understanding and become more dedicated to living with concern and sensitivity in a multiethnic society where racial, ethnic, and cultural difference co-exist with national and human commonalties
3. Institutional acculturation to the multiethnic present and future
4. Resource acculturation of drawing on the strengths of both unum and pluribus to work towards a stronger nation and better world
5. Civic acculturation by developing in students a greater dedication to building a better, more equitable society.

For individuals to perform their civic function in the pluralistic society, they "must have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to act democratically" (Appleton, 1983, 64-65), through public and private schooling. Since education in the United States is based on the premise of such democratic values as freedom, equity, access and the like (Nieto, 1992, 1996), schools--as agents of change--must play their role in manufacturing process of democracy.

Moreover, one of the basic premises of the American educational public system is to integrate diversity multiculturalism into all facets of learning to instill desired values and achieve promising educational goals (Banks, 1995; Grant & Gomez, 1996; Nieto, 1996).

This is articulated in the frequently quoted suggestion by Lewis and Doorlag (1987), who maintain that

1. Commonalties among peoples cannot be recognized unless differences are acknowledged.
2. A society that interweaves the best of all its cultures reflects a truly mosaic image.
3. Multicultural education can restore cultural rights by emphasizing cultural respect and equality.
4. Multicultural education enhances the self-concepts of all students because it provides a more balanced and realistic view of American society.

Finally, it must be born in mind that pluralism is made rich by the mosaic of cultures and subcultures that compose the U.S. society. This phenomenon of diversity is a healthy one that can flourish by promoting civic values of all participants in the global social unit (Marinez-Casio, 1996). Such values as integrity morality, ethical responsibility, virtue, honesty, tolerance, justice, . . .etc. go beyond the boundaries of individuals and groups to embrace human universal parameters (Kierstead & Wagner, 1993). The diverse classroom is replete with these values every human cherishes, and provides ample opportunity to all of its participants to grow and nourish as these values are enhanced by a pluralistic democratic vision.

Enhancing Civic Values Through Multicultural Education

In order to provide a philosophical foundation for the effective schooling, it is worthwhile to look into the definition of multicultural education within which democratic values are promoted. Since multicultural education is a continuing process, it is important to identify its promises in translating the ideals of democracy and actualizing its the desired educational goals.

According to Nieto (1992, p. 208), as in Nieto (1996), multicultural education is to be define in its sociopolitical context as:

> . . . a process of comprehensive school reform and basic education for all students. It challenges and rejects racism and other forms of discrimination in schools and society and accepts and affirms the pluralism (ethnic, racial, linguistic, religious, economic, and gender, among others) that students, their communities, and teachers present. . . Because it uses critical pedagogy as its underlying philosophy and focuses on knowledge, reflection, and action (praxis) as the basis for social change, multicultural education furthers the democratic principles of social justice.

In this sense, multicultural education has salient features congruent with the democratic principles. Furthermore, it aims to enhance and instill civic values in all participants in the culture of educational and social institutions. To be effective, education has to be multicultural and social reconstructionist in order to revitalize democracy in educational institutions, enhance societal values, and bring about the desired social change (Grant & Gomez, 1996)

The goals of multicultural education are as comprehensive as its premises. Suffice to mention the set of goals pertaining to students in the diverse classroom. The understanding of these goals is necessary for implementation, because we cannot afford more lip service in the educational arena; what is needed is an educational reform that is carried out by committed education leaders who understand the needs of their students on the one hand, and their role as educators in meeting these needs, on the other. To promote civic democratic values in all students in multicultural settings, these students should be afforded the multiple learning opportunities to exercise democratic values. Accordingly, multicultural educational solutions, based on the democracy and pluralism, provide all students with ample opportunity to:

(1) develop positive attitudes towards their fellow diverse individuals;

(2) acquire knowledge and skills in order to appreciate diversity;

(3) eradicate negative stereotypical images fostered by ethnocentrism;

(4) bridge the gap of differences through understanding and empathy;

(5) develop historical understanding of their multiethnic society;

(6) develop democratic skills and pluralistic civic values;

(7) appreciate the dynamic societal changes in the democracy;

(8) develop awareness of the world of reality around them;

(9) explore realistic demographic and cultural variables that affect all society.

Furthermore, multicultural education affirms individuals' rights and encourages active participation of diverse groups through a democratic dialogical process (Nieto, 1996). In particular, it affirms its responsibility to prepare educators in order that they may assist all children, adolescents, and adults to understand the significance of cultural heritage in their personal development and participation in democracy. It assumes that (a) ethnic heritage is to be valued as part of each person's biological endowment, (b) language exerts a powerful effect on development of attitudes and skills for democratic interaction, and (c) culture influences identity and learning as participants interact in a given setting.

In addition, multicultural education is a democratic collaborative process that is both affectively and cognitively developed. To enhance democratic values, the mere incorporation of content in the curriculum is not sufficient in and of itself; through the understanding and true empathy of what cultural pluralism and democracy are, we can accomplish the goals of multicultural education (Bennett, 1995; Suleiman, 1996). These goals are set for students while others are set for educators. They are also inherent in the multicultural framework for schooling in democratic institutions.

Closely related to our focus is promoting democratic leadership skills in the pluralistic schools. In fact ethical leadership processes aim to achieve a just democratic society that may take time in the educational journey of learners (Martinez-Cosio, 1996). Classrooms can become factories for civic leaders if conditions of justice exist in the culture of schools. In a diverse classroom, minority and majority students can join the platform of democracy as they take meaningful turns in the learning situations. Teachers, as education leaders can monitor and model this process for these students. If educational leadership

definitions focus on implicitly creating useful change so that leaders are successful when their actions lead to meaningful results (Chrislip & Larson, 1994), then teachers as leaders can make that change happen through their civic role in the classroom.

By the same token, when teachers become more effective in their role as cultural mediators and democratic leaders in the diverse classroom, they can empower their students to model this approach in real-life situations. When participants are given the opportunity to engage in a collaborative democratic process in the classroom and are expected to do so, they become better equipped to interact as advocacy changes to involvement, hostility to civility, confrontation to conversation, and separation to community (Chrilip & Larson, 1994).

The fundamental principle for a successful ethical and collaborative leadership nourishment in the diverse classroom is manifold. First, it needs commitment as individuals are not to become alienated and neutral in the intellectual, and social discourse represented in the classroom culture. Committed teachers and thus students critically and objectively look at the issues in question and try to collaboratively find workable solutions through not only talking, but taking action. Commitment to issues also requires a similar stance to other participants as individuals become mindful of opinions of their peers and sensitive to their feelings and experiences.

Second, effective leadership training in the pluralistic classroom engages others in the problem solving process where the collective group takes ownership through sharing and caring. Given the focus on the issues in the context of learning and teaching, credibility and integrity are built for the whole group, and individualism is de-emphasized. This makes all participants gain the necessary confidence to establish their credibility. Teachers should encourage all participant in the peer leadership roles in a climate of respect, pride, and responsibility. This is an all-inclusive process in which everyone's engagement is necessary; i.e. to be effective part of the solution everybody must participate in defining

the problem. This is vital in diverse settings, because democratic principles do allow finding solutions to emerge from diverse opinions within the class community.

Moreover, multicultural roles in the pluralistic democracy requires optimism and hope. Positive thinking and maintaining an optimistic attitude facilitate reaching a democratic consensus. Through this process the individual's merits are seen through the group's actualization of democratic values and vice verse. Without the spirit of democracy, it would become impossible to reach a pragmatic consensus conducive to the needs of all participants. Ultimately, the individual interests are overshadowed by the outcome of collective decisions.

This approach to promoting civic leadership in the classroom within the overarching democratic values enables participants to make intelligent decisions and choices. Most importantly, it enhances the value to the group and community to the individual and the individual's value to the group. All participants operate within a common vision that is not confined by any particular culture, frame of reference, belief system or other sociopolitical variables. On the contrary, it is global in nature and is expansive and constantly evolving as conditions for change are dictated.

Implications for Teachers

To integrate various multicultural aspects in educational programs within the conceptual framework democracy and pluralism, a number of guidelines that facilitate the fulfillment of the objectives of the democratic educational programs in diverse settings should be considered. Banks (1994) conceptualizes that multicultural education is multidimensional in nature; it consists of five interconnected dimensions: "(a) content integration, (b) the knowledge construction process, (c) prejudice reduction, (d) an equity pedagogy, and (e) an empowering school culture and social structure" (Banks, 1995, p. 4). One of the most fundamental dimensions of multicultural education is the knowledge construction process, because it relates to "the extent to which teachers help students to

understand, investigate and determine how the implicit cultural assumptions, frames of references, perspective, and biases within a discipline influence the ways in which knowledge is constructed within it" (Banks, 1994, p. 5). This is seen as a way of creating a positive atmosphere in schools for harnessing democratic civic values.

These dimensions have important implications for educators who carry out the multiculturation process in schools. It should be pointed out that a dynamic balance between these dimensions is necessary to empower all students and teachers in diverse settings. Furthermore, understanding students' and teachers' characteristics, feelings, attitudes, and experiences can help the programs in attaining the desired educational goals (Nieto, 1996; Gay, 1995; Garcia, 1988; Garcia, 1991). Most importantly, teachers and educators will be to develop more democratic values and attitudes in themselves and their students so that they become more active participants in the pluralistic society (Garcia, 1991; Garza & Barnes, 1989; Gay, 1995) . Unless they possess these values themselves, they will not be able to impart them to their students. To instill these values,

1. Teachers must view their students in a way their students like to be viewed;
2. Teachers must not underestimate the out-of-school values of their students;
3. Teachers must be empathetic rather than sympathetic to their students;
4. Teachers must provide positive and encourage constructive criticism;
5. Teachers must pluralize what they teach to reflect diversity in society;
6. Teachers must value all the differences brought by students in the classroom;
7. Teachers must invite trust and build intercultural communication links;
8. Teachers must engage their students in intellectual discourse to understand issues;
9. Teachers must confront their biases and revisit their interactional styles;
10. Teachers must communicate proactively and encourage this in classrooms.

An educational reform within a multicultural framework requires productive changes not only in the content of curriculum, but also in the teaching practices and social structure of the classroom. Thus, a sound multicultural pedagogy should be based on

"culturally correct" teaching methods and curricula that account for such conditions as sensitivity, empathy, relevance and effectiveness. First, through the use of culturally sensitive materials and techniques students' academic achievement in all areas will increase. Once teachers effectively demonstrate a careful understanding of the learning situation, their students' motivation will be increased. Second, to assume their responsibility to be empathetic, teachers in diverse settings must decenter themselves through an increased ethnic consciousness among people and members of different groups that exist interdependently, and thus, help depolarize interethnic hostility and conflict in the classroom.

Most importantly, culturally relevant curriculum and instructional techniques should relate personally and experientially to the cognitive, academic, social, and linguistic abilities of students (Bennett, 1995; Grant, 1995: Grant & Gomez, 1996). Since these vary from one student to another, teachers are encouraged to diversify the teaching methods and use of teaching aids to address different avenues of learning; sameness in teaching for all will guarantee educational inequity for many (Cortés, 1990). In addition, they should deal with the social and historical realities of the American society to help students gain a better understanding of the causes of oppression and inequality and ways in which these social problems might be eliminated. Students should see themselves in the curriculum as valued members of the multicultural society; textbooks, and literature, and materials must be free from any misinformation and bias, nor should they perpetuate prejudicial and negative stereotypical images about the groups they represent (Suleiman, 1996). Also, the effective implementation of multicultural teaching must be approached as a long-term process that will not produce dramatic, overnight changes in the academic institutions. Finally, providing the best education for all requires us to utilize multicultural resources in the local community and increase the involvement of concerned participants in the education of all students.

A curriculum and teaching model based on multicultural democratic principles can guide and empower teachers as they select the subject matter content relevant to their students, and identify (Suleiman, 1995, 1996). Also, this model allows participants to set pertinent educational goals and objectives conducive to students' attitudes and motivation. In addition, it helps them acquire and transmit skills and knowledge needed for individual's civic responsibilities. Providing a rationale for global education also gives teachers the support they need in facing pressures and questions from colleagues, community, and students (Kierstead & Wagner, 1993; Marinez-Casio, 1996).

Once schools and academic institutions give credence to all students' cultures and their contributions to humanity through multicultural curricular activities and instructional strategies, desired promising educational outcomes will follow. These are: enhancing students' self concept, augmenting their motivation, affirming our society's democratic pluralism, and appreciating cultural diversity.

Conclusion

Given the significant role of schooling in instilling democratic values, it is important to understand the foundations the democracy and pluralism we live in. Despite the increasing diversity of values in today's educational institutions, common elements can be nurtured and enhanced through pluralizing education. One way to ensure the effectiveness of schooling is to celebrate diversity and value individual differences. Most importantly, classrooms form incentives for dialogue and intellectual discourse to achieve the ideals of democratic principles. In short, culturally-correct schooling is a convenient method to affirm the fundamentals of pluralism and democracy.

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